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WASHINGTON SPECIAL ACTIONS GROUP MEETING

February 14, 1972

Time and Place: 11:36 a.m. - 12:12 p.m., White House Situation Room

Subject: Cyprus

Participants:

Chairman Henry A. Kissinger

CIA

Thomas Karamessines
John Waller

State John N. Irwin
Joseph Sisco

NSC Staff

Brig. Gen. Alexander M. Haig
Col. Richard T. Kennedy
Mr. Harold Saunders
Mr. Mark Wandler

DOD Armistead Selden
James H. Noyes

JCS Adm. Thomas H. Moorer

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

It was agreed that:

-- Dr. Kissinger will discuss the Clerides report with the President and obtain his guidance.

-- Agency spokesmen will respond to questions by saying that we are "following developments."

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STATE & NSC REVIEWS COMPLETED

Mr. Kissinger: (to Mr. Karamessines) Can you give us a brief rundown on the current situation?

Mr. Karamessines read the attached intelligence briefing. When Mr. Karamessines read "the Soviets doubtless see in the latest flareup on Cyprus an opportunity to pose as a defender of small nations against efforts to extinguish the sovereignty of any UN member," Dr. Kissinger asked him: "How do we know that?" Mr. Karamessines answered that it was just speculation.

Mr. Kissinger: (to Mr. Sisco) Joe, what do you think?

Mr. Sisco: I think that as long as there is hope of any kind of negotiation between Greece and Cyprus, with Clerides in the middle, it is obviously in our favor. I also think that any time they come to us, we should try to encourage them to seek a peaceful solution to the problem. This is the line we have adopted, and we should try to maintain it as long as possible. This, of course, is the immediate problem, as I see it. We will also have to address some long-term questions.

Mr. Kissinger: What kinds of questions?

Mr. Sisco: For one thing, we have to consider what we would do if the impasse continues. Interestingly enough, we learn something new from each of these crises. They rarely develop from the same set of circumstances as the previous crisis.

Mr. Kissinger: But they are all in your area.

Mr. Sisco: That may be. You know, I get no pleasure from working Saturdays and Sundays. With all of you going to China in a couple of days, it is important to get some answers to the questions I was talking about before. I don't have the answers. First, are we still committed to the territorial integrity and political independence of Cyprus? Second, is it in our interest to stick as close as possible to Greece and Turkey, our NATO allies? How far will we go in giving them our support?

Personally, I draw the line _____ in disassociating ourselves from military intervention on the part of Greece and Turkey in carving up Cyprus. It is possible that Greece could pull _____ off a solution of the arms issue and come up with a new government which would be more responsive to Athens.

Assuming the current negotiations result in a solution which preserves the political independence and territorial integrity of Cyprus, from our point of view, this would be satisfactory. But can this be done, and what is our role? I think the question Popper raises in paragraph 5 of his telegram [Nicosia 313, 13 February] gets to the guts of the thing.

As Henry puts it so often, we have to ask ourselves where we want to come out and what are we going to do to see that we come out where we want?

I have one other point. Makarios has not yet pulled out his Soviet card. I tend to

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that the Soviets are more limited than it has been in the past because they are together now. If, procedurally speaking, we play a mini game -- for example, support the UN effort -- this will give Makarios a choice, and he may decide to pull out the Soviet card.

Mr. Kissinger: What do you mean by Soviet card?

Mr. Sisco: It will be political support, largely in the UN. I don't mean that the Soviets would intervene militarily in Cyprus.

Mr. Kissinger: I think that [Soviet military intervention] is out of the question.

Mr. Sisco: There are many things they could do which would have an effect on the President's trip and our overall relations. Therefore, I think we must take this into account.

Mr. Kissinger: The Soviets have to take it into account, too.

Mr. Sisco: Sure they do.

Mr. Kissinger: I appreciate the thoughts Popper gives us in paragraph 5 about the balance of power. We have to remember, though, that the Soviets have the same problem we do.

Mr. Karamessines: We have had reports that the Greek forces in Cyprus can move at a moment's notice. They just need the word to start moving.

Mr. Kissinger: Are we interested in the territorial integrity of Cyprus? The answer to that question is not "no." But if the answer is "yes," so what? What conclusions can we draw? We have no evidence of an impending attack.

Mr. Sisco: In the short-run I don't think we should be associated with any action which will result in the dismemberment of Cyprus. And in the long-run, I don't think we should be associated with the use of force which will result in enosis.

Mr. Kissinger: We are talking right now about Greek and Turkish forces landing on Cyprus. We're not talking about actions the Cypriot National Guard may take.

Mr. Sisco: That's right. But if there is a civil war, you have to consider what actions the various elements would take. The right-wing elements would be under Gen. Grivas. The National Guard has about 9,000 men, commanded by 600 Greek officers. In my judgment, Makarios cannot rely on the National Guard. Because of this situation, Makarios has taken in Czech arms, for his own personal Guard. If a civil war breaks out, he will probably give these arms to his own people and to left-wing sympathizers, communists. In a civil war, the communists would support Makarios, hoping, of course, to exploit the situation for their own good. Objectively speaking, the way the National Guard goes will determine the need of Greece and Turkey to intervene militarily. They could do this with contingents they already have on the island or with

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the deployment of contingents from their home bases.

Mr. Kissinger: What do we do if we assume there is a real threat to the territorial integrity of Cyprus? There is no evidence that this is the case yet, except for the theory that this is something they could do.

Mr. Sisco: We don't have hard evidence yet.

Mr. Kissinger: Then what kind of evidence do we have?

Mr. Sisco: The evidence comes from a close examination of all the cables. Greece says it will pull out its Ambassador if Makarios doesn't offer any concessions. The implication is that this could lead to civil war. And to me, at least, there is an implication that other actions could be taken, as well.

Mr. Kissinger: All it means is that the Greeks are applying pressure.

Mr. Sisco: Yes, but I was not referring to the immediate issue.

Mr. Irwin: When Clerides says "the Greeks are planning to move tonight," is he referring to Greek forces or the National Guard? [This is a reference to Nicosia 319, 14 February.]

Mr. Kissinger: I think Clerides is just trying to get us involved. He wants us to act as if we think a Greek move is underway.

Mr. Karamessines: We have nothing [redacted] indicating that the Greeks are planning to move tonight. 25X1K1

Mr. Kissinger: Have we asked [redacted] 25X1

Mr. Karamessines: We have, but there is no answer yet.

Mr. Kissinger: I would like to talk to the President about this when I see him at 1:00 p.m. It's already 7:00 p.m. ^{in Cyprus} If they are planning a move, it will be very soon. Suppose we do go to Clerides and ask him to give us the evidence he has about a Greek move. If he gives us his evidence, what do we do? We have asked for all the intelligence information -- and that is perfectly right under the circumstances. What else could Clerides give us?

Mr. Sisco: Don't you think it is a good idea to ask him what evidence he has?

Mr. Kissinger: Why? If he gives us the evidence, what would we do?

Mr. Sisco: They have come to us and told us they have evidence of a Greek move. Do we disregard them entirely? Frankly, I don't believe the report. I was just looking for a way to temporize.

Mr. Kissinger: I don't believe this report either. Why don't we wait for our intelligence reports to come in? Then, if there is evidence, we can go to Clerides. If there is no evidence, why should we go to him and stir the pot?

Mr. Sisco: I don't think we would be stirring the pot if we went to him.

Mr. Irwin: How much evidence can there be? Tom [Karamessines] says the Greeks can move as soon as they are given the word.

Mr. Kissinger: Suppose we go to Clerides and he says they can move in ten minutes. What would we do? What is the next step?

Mr. Sisco: I don't know, Henry. This whole situation is in a delicate balance. We want to stay as close as possible with our Allies, yet we don't want to give the impression that we are in collusion with them.

Mr. Kissinger: With whom would we be in collusion? We haven't done anything.

Mr. Sisco: It's a question of what kind of contacts we maintain.

Mr. Karamessines: For whatever it's worth, the Russians have already put out a little squib, linking us with the Greeks.

Mr. Kissinger: They would do that anyway.

Mr. Sisco: I think that if we could give some low-key indications of sympathy, this would contribute -- in the context of the Cyprus picture -- to not having Makarios come to the conclusion that we were playing any kind of role in what was happening. It would also help prevent him from saying that the only way to save his skin -- or Cyprus' skin, because the two things are different -- would be to turn to the Soviets for help.

Mr. Kissinger: What do you mean? What kind of help?

Mr. Sisco: Basically, political operations -- and support in the UN. Makarios may, however, also ask for additional arms.

Mr. Kissinger: I can't believe that he would ask them for help, unless he thought he was in real trouble. Let's assume that is his state of mind. If we can't protect him, and he thinks the Soviets can, he will turn to them. He strikes me as being a shrewd, tough customer. We can't play games with him. His decision to go to the Soviets for help will be based on his assessment of what the Soviets can do for him. I'm bringing all these things up because I'm just trying to understand our analysis of the situation.

Mr. Sisco: We are not yet in the position to make a judgment about when we will do more, as against the Soviet option. We just haven't reached that juncture yet.

Mr. Kissinger: Against what option? What are we trying to prevent?

Mr. Sisco: We would be satisfied if Greece and Turkey could achieve a settlement which would put the arms issue away and which would come up with a framework for a unified government more responsive to Athens. We can't associate ourselves with anything beyond that.

Mr. Kissinger: No one is arguing that point.

Mr. Sisco: I know. We have a very delicate balance here. We can't appear to be undermining the territorial integrity of Cyprus by giving support to our Allies.

Mr. Irwin: Joe is saying that we have to be concerned with appearances. It's not that we did anything, or that we are going to do anything, or that Greece might do something quickly. Joe is just saying that we should avoid giving the impression that we are helping Greece -- or that we did nothing when we had information about Greece's plans.

Mr. Kissinger: I know of no law that says we have to do something in every instance. Many times, in fact, we have information about something, but do nothing.

Mr. Sisco: I am simply suggesting that at some point we have to face the choices about what kind of supporting role we will play.

Mr. Kissinger: What kind of support are you talking about?

Mr. Sisco: Support for a peaceful resolution of the problem, along the lines I have already described. I'm talking about the possibility of an American role, as compared to leaving the situation open for violence and leaving it open for the Russians to make some political capital.

Mr. Kissinger: How do we translate that into operational terms? If we indicate to Makarios that we will support him, it will not necessarily settle anything else. We want to see what evidence our own intelligence turns up, and Tom is trying to get it. This is perfectly right. In the meantime, is it in our interest to give Cyprus the idea that we will get involved? ____

Mr. Sisco: We have not done that. We are trying to stay as uninvolved as possible.

Mr. Karamessines: What Joe is driving at, I think, is that we might be put into a difficult propaganda position.

Mr. Kissinger: With whom?

Mr. Karamessines: With the world at large -- for not preventing two allies from dismembering Cyprus.

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Mr. Sisco: I think I am clear about our objectives.

Mr. Kissinger: That's right. The statement of objectives is clear to all of us.

Mr. Sisco: Fine. It is also my judgment that we should go to Clerides and ask him to pass on to us any intelligence he has. If we disregard him, they would wonder what our silence means. They would wonder what we are up to.

Mr. Kissinger: I will see the President at 1:00 p.m., and I'll discuss this with him.

Mr. Sisco: I agree with you, Henry, that the report [of Greek intervention tonight] is not true. I don't think the Greeks are ready to move.

Mr. Irwin: I read the cable as Clerides asking us to take action.

Mr. Sisco: Exactly. He's doing this to get us involved.

Mr. Kissinger: He's doing it because he wants a response. He sees how nervous we are.

Mr. Sisco: If we do as Popper suggests, Clerides will take it as a cautious reaction on our part.

Mr. Kissinger: I've done all this probing, Joe, because I wanted to get to the heart of your recommendation. I talked to the President yesterday about your cable, and I will talk to him again on the matter we are discussing now. I think we're all in agreement on what we should try to do. (to Mr. Sisco) I will call you at 1:30 p.m.

Mr. Irwin: Henry, how would you phrase what we are trying to achieve?

Mr. Kissinger: I would say that if the outcome is a broad-based government and a resolution of the arms issues, this would be satisfactory to us. If there is an attack, though, and if Makarios goes to the UN, we will have no choice; we would try to use our good offices.

I met Waldheim at a cocktail party last night. He claims there are 10,000 crates of ammunition on the island. He said the UN may get involved, but that he didn't think there was much for it to do yet. I didn't tell him what our thinking was.

Mr. Sisco: Phillips is going to a lunch today, and Waldheim will also be there. I told Phillips not to give any information whatsoever. I told him not to probe or volunteer any information.

Henry, I also wrote that statement on political independence that went out in the cable over the weekend because I want the record to be absolutely clear if this eventually becomes public.

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Mr. Kissinger: That's all right. I was worried about how your Ambassadors feel.

Mr. Sisco: We are all in line now. I have one other thing. Fred Hoffman has an article [AP 9, 14 February] out stating that U.S. officials are worried about the arms deal. I told the Department spokesman that he should not give out any information -- not even factual information. He should only say that we are following developments.

Mr. Kissinger: That's absolutely right. We should do that in the Pentagon, too.
(to Mr. Selden) Can you see to it?

Mr. Selden: Yes.

Mr. Kissinger: We should keep the lowest possible profile on this issue. We will have one more meeting before we all go away. In the meantime, Joe, I think you have it in good shape.

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- I. Although the threat of violence is always in the background, the Greek Government and President Makarios still seem content to joust with each other in the political and diplomatic arenas.
 - A. Makarios has publicly rejected Friday's Greek demarche as "a completely unacceptable and humiliating ultimatum." The Archbishop, however, hinted that compromise is possible if General Grivas is withdrawn from the island.
 - B. Press reports indicate that Greek Ambassador Panayotakos will return to Athens Wednesday with Makarios' formal written reply.
 - C. Glafeos Clerides, the head of a right-wing party and close advisor to Makarios, has met with Panayotakos presumably to find a way to resolve the Greek-Cypriot rift.

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Panayotakos has said these efforts have failed, and if Makarios' response remains unfavorable, no Greek will return to the island as ambassador.

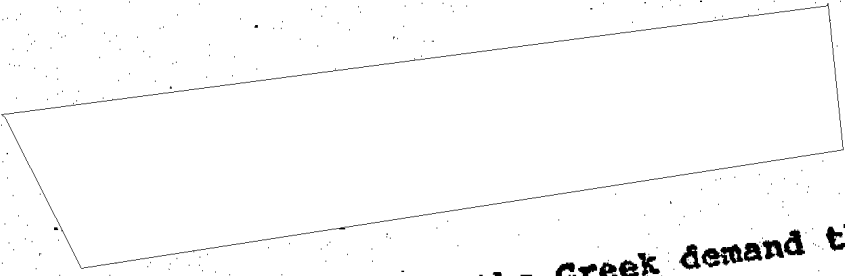
D. Athens is also said to be willing to negotiate, but seemingly only on its own terms. Although the Greeks have publicly said on their demarche was not an ultimatum, privately they appear hopeful that Makarios will capitulate to their demands that he not only turn the arms over to UNFICYP, but that he also expand his government to include pro-Grivas elements and then resign as President.

E. The Greeks appear to be using the Czech arms issue as an excuse to reassert their influence over Makarios, something they have lacked for some time.

II. Turkey has decided to give Greece a free hand provided there is no threat to the Turkish Cypriots.

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- A. Ankara supports the Greek demand that Makarios turn over the Czech arms to the UN forces.
 - B. The Turks will remain aloof on the other aspects of the Greek demarche.
 - C. Ankara officials and the Turkish press continue to play down the events in Cyprus.
- III. The security situation remains calm in Greece and Turkey.

- A. The Turks have the continuing capability to respond forcefully to any deterioration of the situation that would threaten the Turkish Cypriots, but there are no reports that the Turkish military is on alert status.
- B. A previously scheduled Turkish naval exercise is under way in the eastern Mediterranean, but there is no indication that it is in any way related to the current events on Cyprus.

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C. The Greek Special Forces--which would normally be the first alerted for any action in Cyprus--are reported to be at their bases and continuing normal activities.

IV. There have been no significant military developments on Cyprus itself.

A. Key units of the Greek-controlled National Guard, at their usual posts, are well-positioned to seize strategic points in and around Nicosia, but these units reportedly are not on an alert.

B. The Turkish-Cypriot troops have now shifted to an alert status, which is normal in these circumstances.

C. Some Greek Cypriot police have been observed in battle dress rather than regular police uniforms.

V. Crucial to the future course of events in Cyprus is the question of the disposition of the Czech arms.

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- A. The head of the Greek Cypriot police has told Makarios that if he distributes the arms to civilians, the Archbishop can not count on the full support of the police.
- B. Greek Government sources assert that Vassos Lyssarides, who heads a left-wing political party, has received some of the arms, but these reports remain unconfirmed.
- C. The Greek Cypriot Communists have not been heard from yet. Presumably they are still committed to support Makarios in the event of a clash with Greek mainland elements.
- D. Makarios so far does not appear to want to involve the USSR. The Soviets doubtless see in the latest flareup on Cyprus an opportunity to pose as a defender of small nations against efforts to extinguish the sovereignty of any UN member.
- E. Makarios has not yet moved to approach the UN. He may wait at least until he has played a few more of his cards with the Greeks.

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